

Elite Opponents

Yuan-Ti

By Andy Collins



This column aims to provide DMs with interesting opponents to pit against the PCs in their campaigns. Using a simple base -- typically a standard monster from the *Monster Manual* -- each column uses the building blocks provided in the rulebooks to craft a variety of foes. Through the addition of class levels or templates, or even via simple HD advancement, the creatures presented in this column are transformed from run-of-the-mill opponents into memorable foes. Check out this column every month for a new batch of formidable enemies built from a different monster!

Yuan-Ti: Masters of Terror

Few creatures inspire such a visceral reaction among players and characters as the yuan-ti. The very epitome of corruption and evil, these serpentine creatures are the quintessential foes of characters who champion the cause of righteousness.

But if evil were the only prerequisite for a prime enemy, the yuan-ti would have to stand in a very long line indeed. What puts these ruthless snake people in a class of their own is their ability to pass unnoticed among humans. The fact that such dark schemers can walk the streets with brazen impunity adds insult to the injury of their evil, making them memorable foes indeed.

Monster Manual v. 3.5 ratcheted the power level of a typical pureblood yuan-ti down a notch. That change is great news for DMs because it allows more room for customization of the yuan-ti, as well as the opportunity to introduce them into the campaign a bit earlier. At a challenge rating of only 3, a pureblood yuan-ti can oppose the party from the campaign's earliest days, and with the addition of class levels, templates, and other variations, it can continue to plague the PCs for long months or years.

The pureblood yuan-ti functions best behind the scenes, pulling strings and keeping a low profile. Thanks to its ability to disguise itself as a human, its *charm person* ability, and its natural stealth, even a single pureblood can give low-level characters a real challenge. But infinite variations are also possible depending on what the DM chooses to add on to the creature. With the right class levels or template, the cunning pureblood can become a deadly combatant or potent spellcaster.

The three pureblood yuan-ti in this column are rated at CR 6, 11, and 12. Each one can be further adjusted by adding or subtracting class levels, applying additional templates, and so forth. Since yuan-ti frequently work in groups, these foes can also be encountered in the company of others of their kind, functioning as



either rank-and-file gang members or leaders of infiltration teams.

Slisk, the Flesh Half-Golem Yuan-Ti

The yuan-ti enjoy experimenting with various magical and biological procedures. The best known of these is the process that creates tainted ones and broodguards (see *Savage Species*), but there is almost no limit to the serpentfolk's thirst for new ways to corrupt and twist living creatures. At times, they even use their own people as test subjects.

Slisk was one of those unlucky yuan-ti selected for such testing. Once a valued spy, his failure on an important mission bought him the yuan-ti equivalent of a death sentence: a visit by the magical and biological engineers. In an effort to create a more durable soldier, the yuan-ti grafted the dead limbs of powerful humanoid beings onto Slisk in place of his own. Now he serves his people as a half-golem, neither a truly living creature nor a construct. So far, his mind has remained his own, but it's only a matter of time before the engineers decide to add another golem part and push Slisk over the edge. Characters who encounter Slisk both before and after this occurrence would have a chance to fully grasp the horror of yuan-ti experimentation.

The half-golem template appears in *Monster Manual II*.

Slisk: Male flesh half-golem yuan-ti pureblood; CR 6; Medium monstrous humanoid; HD 4d8+8+10; hp 36; Init +4; Spd 30 ft. (can't run); AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (1d6+4/18-20, +1 *scimitar*) or +5 ranged (1d8+3/[TS]3, masterwork composite longbow [+3 Str bonus]); Full Atk +8 melee (1d6+4/18-20, +1 *scimitar*) or +5 ranged (1d8+3/[TS]3, masterwork composite longbow [+3 Str bonus]); SA spell-like abilities; SQ *alternate form*, berserk, damage reduction 5/adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., *detect poison*, immunity to magic, spell resistance 14; AL CE; SV Fort +5, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 17, Dex 11, Con 15, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +9, Disguise +1 (+6 when impersonating a human), Hide +0, Knowledge (religion) +2, Listen +4, Spot +4; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Dodge*, Improved Initiative.

*Slisk cannot use this feat because he no longer qualifies for it.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day -- *animal trance* (DC 10), *cause fear* (DC 9), *charm person* (DC 9), *darkness*, *entangle* (DC 9). Caster level 4th.

Alternate Form (Sp): Slisk can assume the form of a Tiny to Large viper as a psionic ability. This ability is similar to a *polymorph* spell (caster level 19th), but he does not regain any hit points for changing form and he can assume only viper forms. Slisk gains the natural weapons of the viper form he assumes.

Berserk (Ex): If Slisk takes damage in combat, he flies into a berserk rage the following round, attacking wildly until either he or his opponent is dead. He gains +4 Strength, +4 Constitution, and -2 AC while berserk. While Slisk is in a berserk state, his statistics change from the above as follows: HD 4d8+16+10; hp 44; AC 20, touch 8, flat-footed 20; Grp +9; Atk +10 melee (1d6+6/18-20, +1 *scimitar*) or +5 ranged (1d8+3/[TS]3, masterwork composite longbow [+3 Str bonus]); Full Atk +10 melee (1d6+6/18-20, +1 *scimitar*) or +5 ranged (1d8+3/[TS]3, masterwork composite longbow [+3 Str bonus]); SV Fort +7, Will +4;

Str 21, Con 19; Concentration +11. He cannot end his berserk state voluntarily.

Detect Poison (Sp): Slisk has the psionic ability to use *detect poison* as the spell (caster level 6th).

Immunity to Magic (Ex): Slisk is immune to any spell or spell-like ability that allows spell resistance. In addition, certain spells and effects function differently against him. A magical attack that deals cold or fire damage slows Slisk (as the *slow* spell) for 2d6 rounds, with no saving throw. A magical attack that deals electricity damage breaks any slow effect on him and heals 1 point of damage for every 3 points of damage the attack would otherwise deal. If the amount of healing would cause him to exceed his full normal hit points, he gains any excess as temporary hit points. Slisk gets no saving throw against attacks that deal electricity damage.

Possessions: +1 *chain shirt*, masterwork heavy wooden shield, +1 *scimitar*, masterwork composite longbow (+3 Str bonus), 20 arrows, *potion of cure serious wounds*.

Slisk as a Construct

If Slisk gains another golem limb and fails his Will save, his statistics are as follows.

Slisk Construct: Male flesh half-golem yuan-ti pureblood; CR 6; Medium construct (augmented monstrous humanoid); HD 4d8+20; hp 38; Init +4; Spd 30 ft. (can't run); AC 22, touch 10, flat-footed 22; Base Atk +4; Grp +7; Atk +8 melee (1d6+4/18-20, +1 *scimitar*) or +5 ranged (1d8+3/[TS]3, masterwork composite longbow [+3 Str bonus]); Full Atk +8 melee (1d6+4/18-20, +1 *scimitar*) or +5 ranged (1d8+3/[TS]3, masterwork composite longbow [+3 Str bonus]); SA spell-like abilities; SQ *alternate form*, berserk, construct traits, damage reduction 5/adamantine, darkvision 60 ft., *detect poison*, immunity to magic, spell resistance 14; AL NE; SV Fort +3, Ref +4, Will +4; Str 17, Dex 11, Con -, Int 6, Wis 10, Cha 6.

Skills and Feats: Concentration +7, Disguise +1, Hide +0, Knowledge (religion) +2, Listen +4, Spot +4; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Dodge*, Improved Initiative.

*Slisk cannot use this feat because he no longer qualifies for it.

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day -- *animal trance* (DC 10), *cause fear* (DC 9), *charm person* (DC 9), *darkness*, *entangle* (DC 9). Caster level 4th.

Alternate Form (Sp): Slisk can assume the form of a Tiny to Large viper as a psionic ability. This ability is similar to a *polymorph* spell (caster level 19th), but he does not regain any hit points for changing form and he can assume only viper forms. Slisk gains the natural weapon of the viper form he assumes.

Berserk (Ex): If Slisk takes damage in combat, he flies into a berserk rage the following round, attacking wildly until either he or his opponent is dead. He gains +4 Strength, +4 Constitution, and -2 AC while berserk. While Slisk is in a berserk state, his statistics change from the above as follows: AC 20, touch 8, flat-footed 20; Grp +9; Atk +10 melee (1d6+6/18-20, +1 *scimitar*) or +5 ranged (1d8+3/[TS]3, masterwork composite longbow [+3 Str bonus]); SV Fort +3, Will +4; Str 21. He cannot end his berserk state voluntarily.

Possessions: +1 *chain shirt*, masterwork heavy wooden shield, +1 *scimitar*, masterwork composite longbow (+3 Str bonus), 20 arrows, *potion of cure serious wounds*.

Virilya, the Elite Half-Fiend/Half-Yuan-Ti Sorcerer

Yuan-ti are creatures of corruption, so the fact that they frequently consort with foul creatures of the Abyss should come as no surprise. Fiendish yuan-ti are common, and they often occupy positions of great power. But half-fiend yuan-ti, marked by their god Merrshaulk as favored children, rank even above the fiendish versions of their kind.

Virilya is the daughter of a pureblood yuan-ti wizard and a marilith demon. Her fiendish appearance (including batlike wings) prevented her from working in secret among the humans in her youth, so she remained among her people, honing her abilities. After slaying a particularly irksome rival, Virilya was rewarded by her mother with a fiendish symbiont that serves as her familiar. Thanks to her intellect and personal magnetism, she has risen in power to become the chief advisor to a mighty yuan-ti abomination. Some, in fact, whisper that it is Virilya, and not her master, who truly rules the tribe.

Virilya: Female elite half-fiend/half-yuan-ti pureblood sorcerer 6; CR 11; Medium outsider (native); HD 4d8+12 plus 6d4+18; hp 63; Init +8; Spd 30 ft., fly 30 ft. (average); AC 19, touch 15, flat-footed 15; Base Atk +7; Grp +8; Atk +8 melee (1d4+1, claw) or +12 ranged (1d8+1/[TS]3, masterwork composite longbow [+1 Str bonus]); Full Atk +8 melee (1d4+1, 2 claws) and +3 melee (1d6, bite) or +12/+7 ranged (1d8+1/[TS]3, masterwork composite longbow [+1 Str bonus]); SA smite good, spell-like abilities; SQ *alternate form*, damage reduction 5/magic, darkvision 60 ft., *detect poison*, fiendish familiar, immunity to poison, resistance to acid 10, cold 10, electricity 10, and fire 10, spell resistance 20; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +12, Will +12; Str 13, Dex 19, Con 17, Int 16, Wis 12, Cha 19.

Skills and Feats: Bluff +13, Concentration +15, Diplomacy +6, Disguise +11, Hide +11, Intimidate +6, Knowledge (arcana) +12, Knowledge (religion) +6, Knowledge (the planes) +10, Listen +10, Sense Motive +4, Spellcraft +14, Spot +10, Use Magic Device +10; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Dodge, Greater Spell Focus (enchantment), Improved Initiative, Spell Focus (enchantment).

Smite Good (Su): Once per day, Virilya can make a normal melee attack to deal 10 points of extra damage.

Spell-Like Abilities: 3/day -- *darkness*, *poison* (DC 18); 1/day -- *contagion* (DC 18), *desecrate* (DC 16), *unholy blight* (DC 18). Caster level 10th. 1/day -- *animal trance* (DC 16), *cause fear* (DC 15), *charm person* (DC 15), *darkness*, *entangle* (DC 15). Caster level 4th.

Alternate Form (Sp): Virilya can assume the form of a Tiny to Large viper as a psionic ability. This ability is similar to a *polymorph* spell (caster level 19th), but Virilya does not regain any hit points for changing form and she can assume only viper forms. Virilya loses her natural weapons and gains those of the viper form she assumes.

Detect Poison (Sp): Virilya has the psionic ability to use *detect poison* as the spell (caster level 6th).

Fiendish Familiar: Virilya has a fiendish familiar grafted to her back. It grants her the following benefits.

Arcane Education (Ex): The fiendish familiar serves as a source of spell knowledge for Virilya.

Enhance Spellcaster (Ex): The fiendish familiar increases Virilya's effective Charisma score by 2 for the purpose of determining bonus spells.

Share Spells (Su): Any spell Virilya casts on herself automatically also affects her fiendish familiar. Additionally, she may cast a spell with a target of "You" on the symbiont instead of on herself. Virilya and her familiar can share spells even if the spells normally do not affect creatures of the familiar's type. Spells targeted on Virilya by another spellcaster do not affect her familiar and vice versa. See page 218 in the *Fiend Folio* for more details on the fiendish familiar symbiont.

Sorcerer Spells Known (6/8/6/4; save DC 14 + spell level or 16 + spell level for enchantment spells): 0 -- *dancing lights*, *daze**, *detect magic*, *ghost sound*, *mage hand*, *read magic*, *touch of fatigue*; 1st -- *charm person**, *disguise self*, *mage armor*, *ray of enfeeblement*; 2nd -- *daze monster**, *web*; 3rd -- *deep slumber**.

*Enchantment spell.

Possessions: Masterwork composite longbow (+1 Str bonus), 20 arrows, *cloak of resistance* +2, *bracers of armor* +2, *ring of protection* +1, *wand of fireball* (20 charges), *wand of lightning bolt* (10 charges), *boots of levitation*, divine scroll of *lesser planar ally*, 73 pp.

Traulsk, the Grafted Yuan-Ti Pureblood Ranger/Assassin

While the yuan-ti are known for grafting serpentine parts onto other creatures, some choose to undergo a similar process at the hands of their demonic allies. The fiendish grafts they acquire in this way increase their physical and political power, marking them as individuals to be reckoned with.

Traulsk volunteered for grafting as a young pureblood, seeing the process as an opportunity to get a head start on his competitors. A pair of long, grueling procedures replaced both of Traulsk's legs with fiendish grafts, granting him speed, mobility, and vigor. Now he serves as his tribe's most respected hunter, tracking down and slaying the enemies of his people.

Traulsk: Male elite yuan-ti pureblood ranger 3/assassin 5; CR 12*; Medium monstrous humanoid; HD 4d8+12 plus 3d8+9 plus 5d4+15; hp 84; Init +8; Spd 30 ft.; AC 23, touch 15, flat-footed 19; Base Atk +10; Grp +13; Atk +14 melee (1d6+3/18-20, masterwork scimitar) or +16 ranged (1d8+6/[TS]3, +2 *composite longbow* [+3 Str bonus] with +1 *unholy arrows*); Full Atk +14/+9 melee (1d6+3/18-20, masterwork scimitar) or +16/+11 ranged (1d8+6/[TS]3, +2 *composite longbow* [+3 Str bonus] with +1 *unholy arrows*); SA death attack, sneak attack +3d6, spell-like abilities, spells; SQ +2 save against poison, *alternate form*, combat style (archery), darkvision 60 ft., *detect poison*, favored enemy (humans +2), fiendish grafts, improved uncanny dodge, poison use, spell resistance 14, uncanny dodge, wild empathy +4; AL CE; SV Fort +8, Ref +15, Will +7; Str 16, Dex 18, Con 17, Int 10, Wis 12, Cha 12.

Skills and Feats: Climb +7, Concentration +10, Disguise +9, Hide +11, Jump +7, Listen +5, Move Silently

+12, Spot +13, Survival +9; Alertness, Blind-Fight, Dodge, Endurance, Improved Initiative, Mobility, Point Blank Shot, [Rapid Shot], Scribe Scroll, Shot On The Run, Track.

Death Attack: If Traulsk studies his victim for 3 rounds and then makes a successful sneak attack with a melee weapon that successfully deals damage, he can also choose to either kill the target or paralyze it for 1d6+5 rounds (DC 15 Fortitude negates either effect).

Spell-Like Abilities: 1/day -- *animal trance* (DC 13), *cause fear* (DC 12), *charm person* (DC 12), *darkness*, *entangle* (DC 12). Caster level 4th.

Spells: Traulsk cannot cast any assassin spells because his Intelligence is not high enough.

Alternate Form (Sp): Traulsk can assume the form of a Tiny to Large viper as a psionic ability. This ability is similar to a *polymorph* spell (caster level 19th), but Traulsk does not regain any hit points for changing form and he can assume only viper forms. Traulsk gains the natural weapons of the viper form he assumes.

Combat Style: Traulsk has selected archery as his combat style. He gains the use of the Rapid Shot feat when he wears light or no armor.

Detect Poison (Sp): Traulsk has the psionic ability to use *detect poison* as the spell (caster level 6th).

Favored Enemy: Traulsk gains a +2 bonus on his Bluff, Listen, Sense Motive, Spot, and Survival checks when using these skills against humans. He gets the same bonus on weapon damage rolls against creatures of this type.

Fiendish Grafts: Traulsk's legs are fiendish grafts (see *Fiend Folio*, page 209). His fast leg increases his speed by 10 feet when he is not wearing heavy armor or carrying a heavy load, and it also grants him a +5 competence bonus on Climb and Jump checks (already included above). His strong leg grants him a +2 inherent bonus to Constitution (already included above).

Improved Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Traulsk can no longer be flanked, since he can react to opponents on opposite sides of him as easily as he can react to a single attacker. Only a 9th-level or higher rogue can sneak attack him.

Poison Use: Traulsk is trained in the use of poison and never risks accidentally poisoning himself when applying poison to a blade.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): Traulsk can react to danger before his senses would normally allow him to do so. He retains his Dexterity bonus to AC even when caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker.

Wild Empathy (Ex): Traulsk can use body language, vocalizations, and demeanor to improve the attitude of an animal (such as a bear or a monitor lizard). This ability functions just like a Diplomacy check to improve the attitude of a person, except that his bonus on the check is +4. The typical domestic animal has a starting attitude of indifferent, while wild animals are usually unfriendly. Traulsk and the animal must study each other for 1 minute. This ability can also be used to influence a magical beast with an Intelligence score of 1 or 2, but Traulsk takes a -4 penalty on the check.

Possessions: +1 *chain shirt*, +1 *buckler*, masterwork scimitar, +2 *composite longbow* (+3 Str bonus), 12 arrows, 3 adamantite arrows, 3 +1 *unholy arrows*, *gauntlets of ogre power*, deathblade poison (1 dose); *ring of protection* +1, 52 pp.

*+1 CR included for value of fiendish grafts.

About the Author

By day, Andy Collins works as a senior designer in the Roleplaying R&D department at Wizards of the Coast, Inc. His credits include the *Player's Handbook* v.3.5, the *Epic Level Handbook*, and the *Draconomicon*. By night, however, he fights crime as a masked vigilante. Or maybe not.

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